

ANNUAL REPORT TO CDNL 2010

Name of country: The Gambia
Name of library: The Gambia National Library Services Authority
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1. General overview of recent major developments at the reporting library.

It has been a very rewarding year for The Gambia National Library Services Authority. Its profile was greatly enhanced when the National Assembly enacted The Gambia National Library Services Authority Act, 2009. Also, through its active participation as a member of the Coordinating Committee (CCM) tasked with the implementation of the country's Education Policy 2004-2015, as well as provision of access to knowledge and information, the National Library continued to play a major role in support of education, culture, and creativity.

2. Note of the National library's relationship to government, citation of legislation which sets out the library's mandate, and any other legislation which directly or indirectly affects the library's operations.

The Gambia National Library falls under the purview of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education. It is managed by a Board of Directors whose members are appointed by the Gambian President. The Board, which includes a Chairman, a Vice Chairman (the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education), the Director General and representatives from various sectors of the community, serves for three year renewable terms (for non ex-officio members).

The National Library was first established vide an Act of Parliament known as The Gambia Library Board Act. 976. But over the years the said Act was found to be very outdated and weak, giving very little power and autonomy to permit the National Library execute its mandate effectively. Proposals for its amendment were submitted to and accepted by cabinet. This culminated in the enactment by the National assembly, of The Gambia Library Services Authority Act, 2009.

The Act enhanced the status of the National Library to a fully fledged Authority with mandate to provide leadership and coordinating roles for library and information matters in the country. Its previously weak legal deposit provisions have been strengthened and now prescribe stiff penalties for non-compliance, and cover all types of material such as print, audio-visuals, and electronic records.

Other legislation that directly or indirectly affects the national Library's operations is:

(a) The Education Policy 2004-2015

This provides a policy framework that sets out the national agenda for education for the period 2004-2015. It focuses on access and quality education as means of poverty reduction. According to the document, a literate environment can only be created through provision of relevant literature. It also advocates for the provision of rural libraries under programmes for adult and non-formal education as well as reading materials through school libraries and publishing/production of books as ways of addressing the issue of quality in relation to teaching/learning resources.

- (b) The National Archives Act, 1976
- (c) The Education Act, 1976
- (d) The Gambia Copyright -2015
- (e) The National Communications and Information Policy (NACIP)
- (f) The women's Act, 2010

3 Key facts and figures (size of major collections, number of staff, total operating budget, etc).

Size of Major Collections: The National Library has a collection of 95,0000 volumes and 7000 periodicals.

Legal Deposit: 276 documents were received on legal deposit

No. of staff: There is a staff complement of 42

No of visitors: 37,129

Total operating budget: The National Library has a budget of D3,500,000:00. This is roughly equivalent to US\$125,000:00

4 New developments in creating and building collections.

As a dual function Library, the Gambia National Library Services Authority lays a lot of emphasis on the development and facilitating access to its entire collection. Its collection of materials are acquired through, purchase gift or legal deposit. The new and strengthened legal deposit law seemed to have persuaded many previously reluctant publishers to deposit copies of their works to the library more readily. Another encouraging development is the decision by the National Assembly to deposit original signed copies of all its Acts Assented to by the President. The newly-established Central Bureau of Statistics (formerly the Department of Central Statistics) also deposited all outstanding copies of reports and surveys it had generated over the past 15 years.

5 Collaboration with other libraries, archives and museums.

Being very proud of our new University of The Gambia, the National Library made to it several donations of academic and medical books it had collected from our overseas partner Book Aid International.

The National Library's Director General serves as a member of the University of the Gambia's Library Committee.

We have continued to collaborate with the National Archives in the exchange of documents, as well as referrals to and from each other's institution.

Abdou Wally Mbye
Director General
The Gambia National Library Services Authority
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